



Franklin County

A Natural Setting for Opportunity

COUNTY OF FRANKLIN

ANNUAL REPORT TO CITIZENS

Now We Go Live to SML—Tourism Contributes Over \$2 Million to Local Economy



This was a banner year for tourism in Franklin County. Highlighting the year's accomplishments were three major national professional ESPN/BASSMASTER tournaments hosted at Smith Mountain Lake. The high point was the County's first ever nationally televised sporting event, the 2007 Blue Ridge Brawl BassMasters Elite tournament featured on ESPN2 in June. These fishing tournaments brought over 15,000 spectators to our community and generated well over \$2.0 million in new visitor spending for the region. Tourism continues to grow in the County as the Smith Mountain Lake Visitor Center, Booker T. Washington National Monument, and the Blue Ridge Institute all reported increases in visitor attendance. Initiatives such as The Crooked Road, the Wilderness Trail, 'Round the Mountain' and the Virginia Birding and Wildlife Trail will continue to open new doors for tourism marketing in the upcoming year.

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Re-Licensing the Smith Mountain Project

The Tri-County Re-licensing Committee (TCRC) has worked with the re-licensing of the Smith Mountain Project - which includes the Dam, Smith Mountain Lake, and Leesville Lake - for the past two and one-half years. TCRC formally represents Franklin County, Bedford County, Pittsylvania County and Campbell County. Campbell County joined TCRC after it was formed but the name remained the same. TCRC was created for one purpose: to provide a single point of contact for the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission [FERC] and AEP for the four Counties and their 240,000 citizens.

The TCRC is comprised of two Supervisors from each County along with each County's Administrator. "We are nearing the end of the process," reports Russ Johnson, Chairman. "The sixteen studies that we have been engaged in during the last fifteen months have now been declared as 'Final,' and a Preliminary License Plan (PLP) has been drafted. A final PLP will soon be released and the counties will have until January 30, 2008 to respond." Discussions/negotiations between AEP and the Counties have already begun.

For many citizens, the Re-licensing meeting held at Trinity Ecumenical Church at the end of September proved disappointing. The most common concern was the feeling that neither AEP nor FERC were listening to the communities' concerns. "It's been an uphill battle," said Russ Johnson, "and ultimately what we obtain as a settlement

will be decided in large part by the intensity of support from our citizens. It's easier for FERC and AEP to ignore four counties than the 240,000 citizens of those Counties.

What's at stake is the issuance of a new 30 year Federal Operator's license and AEP's commitment to properly care for the lakes including water quality, sediment, erosion, debris, increased recreational public access. If AEP doesn't commit to caring for the lakes, the Counties will which could lead to increased taxes. However, more than just money is at stake. We are asking for more lake access ramps; a new recreation park in the Route 40 area; drinking water permits for water withdrawal; a location for a water treatment plant in the Route 40 area; bathroom and picnic facilities at all boat ramps; treatment of invasive weeds; planting of weed beds to encourage fish spawning; removal of debris from the lakes; stabilization of shore lines and the islands within the project to reduce erosion; removal of sediment that has now denied many citizens access to the lake; and support for Marine Fire and Safety. "It's a big package" said Johnson, "but it's also a set of modest requests in proportion to the profit that AEP makes on this project every year. I like to think of it as our responsibility to provide an 'inheritance' to future generations, said Johnson - what is decided now will last for another thirty years - we have to get it right."

COUNTY OF FRANKLIN

40 East Court Street
Rocky Mount, VA 24151
540-483-3030
www.franklincountyva.org
www.visitfranklincountyva.org

Meet the Board of Supervisors. Franklin County is governed by a seven-member board of Supervisors elected by voters from each of the seven County magisterial districts. The Board appoints a County Administrator who directs the County's day-to-day operations.



Blackwater District

W. Wayne Angell, Chairman
40 E Court Street
Rocky Mount, VA 24151
540-483-7441
wayneangell@franklincountyva.org



Blue Ridge District

Hubert Quinn, Supervisor
40 E Court Street
Rocky Mount, VA 24151
540-365-7243
hubertquinn@franklincountyva.org



Boone District

David Hurt, Supervisor
40 E Court Street
Rocky Mount, VA 24151
540-721-7406
davidhurt@franklincountyva.org



Gills Creek District

Russell Johnson, Supervisor
40 E Court Street
Rocky Mount, VA 24151
540-721-5339
russjohnson@franklincountyva.org



Rocky Mount District

Charles Wagner, Vice-Chairman
40 E Court Street
Rocky Mount, VA 24151
540-483-9109
charleswagner@franklincountyva.org



Snow Creek District

W. Leland Mitchell, Supervisor
40 E Court Street
Rocky Mount, VA 24151
540-483-4488
jmitch@swva.net



Union Hall District

Charles Poindexter, Supervisor
40 E Court Street
Rocky Mount, VA 24151
540-489-8484
charlespoindexter@franklincountyva.org

Chairman's Message

On behalf of the Franklin County Board of Supervisors, it is my pleasure to present the County's 2007 Annual Report. There are many exciting projects and service enhancements in the works as we continue to strive to keep Franklin County the wonderful place we know it to be.

The Board of Supervisors is proud of the accomplishments of our school system and what that translates into for our children. We are delighted at the growth in job opportunities that have been created for our citizens, and excited about the continued expansion of both active and passive recreational opportunities being offered to our citizens and those who come to visit us.

We encourage all of our citizens to be involved with their local government and let us know how we can best serve you. Please visit our web site regularly at www.franklincountyva.org for fresh news and happenings and sign up for our free email news as well on the County's web site. Working together, Franklin County continues to be "A Natural Setting for Opportunity".

W. Wayne Angell

Franklin County— A Natural Setting for Opportunity

Nestled along the beautiful Roanoke Valley among Virginia's Blue Ridge Mountains lies **Franklin County, Virginia**. Commonly referred to as the "Land Between the Lakes and the Blue Ridge", Franklin County is an area carved from mountainous terrain with breathtaking vistas of the Blue Ridge Mountains. Our County is thickly carpeted with pastures and blessed on either side by the crystal-blue waters of Philpott Lake and the spectacular shoreline of Smith Mountain Lake. Franklin County was first settled in the mid 1700s as European immigrants joined Native Americans and African Americans to create a unique community, rich in history. From the slopes of the Blue Ridge Mountains to the rolling countryside, our county is home to many century old structures including the boyhood home of Booker T. Washington—the most influential African American of the post Civil War era and the home of Jubal Early—the confederate general and acclaimed historian. Today, Franklin County's abundance of beauty and natural resources continue to attract visitors and new residents. Our county is "A Natural Setting For Opportunity"as our land of rivers, lakes, forests, farms, and neighborhoods offer a rich combination of rural character, modern amenities, old-world charm and Southern hospitality.

Franklin County Parks & Recreation Department Adds to Quality of Life

Record numbers of families visited and participated in Franklin County Parks & Recreation activities and facilities in 2006/2007. New participation records were posted in youth soccer, youth basketball, girls softball, and fall baseball. Classes grew as well with records set in adult arts, dog obedience, and spring crafts camps. Special events continue to grow with new attendance records set at the JAKES Event, the Trout Heritage Day event, the MW Windows Mountain Bike Festival, and the Pigg River Ramble Weekend Festival.

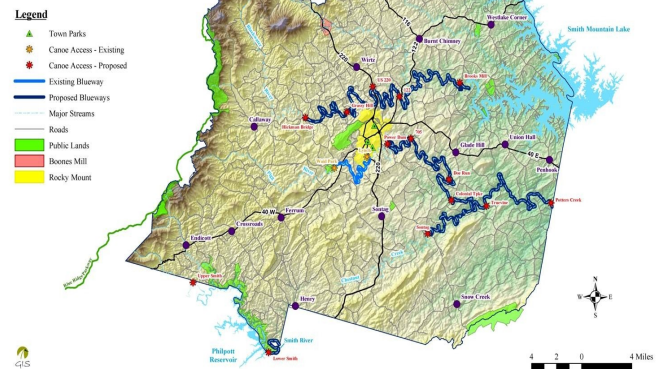
New public park facilities added in 2006/2007 include the 37-acre Smith Mountain Lake Community Park. This is the first new park built at the lake in over thirty years. Facilities at the park include a fully accessible fishing pier (thanks to a partnership with the Virginia Department of Game & Inland Fisheries), a 1.5 mile hiking trail, and the Smith Mountain Lake & Rocky Mount Rotary Clubs Playground. Also joining the public inventory this year were the 35-mile long Blackwater River Blueway, and the five-field Waid Youth Field Sports Complex. Play will begin this fall at the youth sports complex.

The Board of Supervisors adopted the Master Plan for the Pigg River Park and directed staff to begin the design work that will construct Virginia's first in-stream river park at this site. The County, in partnership with the US Army Corps of Engineers, completed construction of a five-mile trail connecting Philpott Dam with Salt House Branch Recreation area. This is the first phase of a park trail that will eventually circle all of Philpott Reservoir. **For more information on parks & recreation programs and projects, contact the Parks & Recreation Department at 540-483-9293.**



Opening day at Smith Mountain Lake Community Park

Franklin County Blueways



Franklin County Blue Ways Plan



Proposed Master Plan for Pigg River Park

Fire Marshal's Office Administers Fire Alarm Program to Needy Families

Smoke alarms are the residential fire safety success story of the past quarter century. Since around 1970, the home fire death rate has been reduced by half as a direct result of installation of smoke detectors in residential homes.

Through a grant made possible by the Virginia Department of Fire Programs, the Franklin County Department of Public Safety - Fire Marshal's Office has distributed or installed over 150 free smoke detectors to needy families in Franklin County. The Fire Marshal's office recommends that every home in Franklin County have at least one smoke detector. There are a limited number of free smoke detectors still available under this program. Citizens may apply in person at the Public Safety Office or contact the Fire Marshal's Office by phone (540) 483-3091.

Beginning this fall, the Public Safety Department will offer free Carbon Monoxide Detectors to needy families through another grant made possible by the Virginia Department of Fire Programs. The units will be awarded based on need. For more information, please contact Fire Marshal's Office.

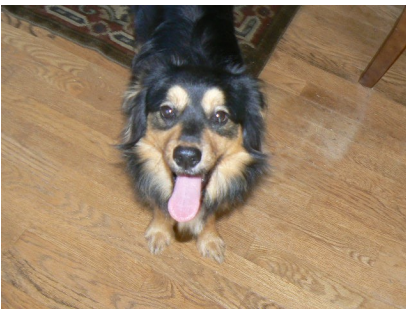
For information more information on Fire, EMS, Animal Control or Emergency Management, contact the staff at Public Safety, 1488 Franklin Street, Rocky Mount, VA 24151 or 540-483-3091.



Public Safety Training News: EMT Program

This past school year marked the beginning of the Emergency Medical Technician- Basic (EMT-B) Program made possible by a collaborative effort among Franklin County Department of Public Safety (FCDPS), Franklin County High School (FCHS), and Virginia Western Community College (VWCC). The EMT-B Program is an intense double block, single semester course elective for high school students over the age of sixteen (16). At the

completion of the EMT-B Program, students are eligible to sit for the Virginia Office of Emergency Medical Services EMT-B Certification Exam. Once EMT-B certification is obtained, the individual is able to staff ambulances in the County's public safety system and to provide care to patients utilizing the 9-1-1 system. With Franklin County Department of Public Safety operating the program, Franklin County High School scheduling students for the program, and VWCC providing college level credit for completion of the program, sixteen (16) students – six (6) students in the fall semester and ten (10) students in the spring semester – were able to participate in the program. Preliminary student enrollment estimates for the upcoming school year show a sharp increase in program participation for the 2007-2008 school year. For more information on the EMT-B program, please feel free to contact Eric Newman at 540-263-0233.



Henry was saved from the Animal Shelter in Spring 2007 and now makes his home in NC

Animal Shelter Sees Improvements!

The Animal Control Division of Public Safety would like to thank everyone who has contributed to our success in the last year. Volunteers and donors have generously contributed their time and money to help shelter animals. As a result of the efforts of many people in the community, the shelter is making great progress in reducing the euthanasia rate of shelter animals.

In addition to the efforts of volunteers, the Board of Supervisors approved an additional position at the shelter to continue to strive for lower euthanasia rates of shelter animals. The Animal Adoption Specialist focuses on evaluating animals for specific needs and adoptability, coordinating with various rescue groups, and managing volunteer efforts. As a result, our shelter volunteer program is steadily increasing. Volunteers work with the animals to provide socialization and minimize the stress of being in the shelter. Recent animal adoption events

have been successful in placing adoptable animals in new homes and increasing public awareness of the needs of homeless animals in the County.

Currently, the shelter is undergoing some much needed repairs. This includes new paint for the kennels along with installation of a donated washer and dryer set. Other donations received include toys, chew bones, a portable dog bath, linens, and treats for the animals. Volunteers have also assisted in securing monetary donations for shelter improvements and a building fund. If you are interested in adopting a homeless pet, assisting at the shelter or making a donation, please contact Faye Hicks, Adoption Specialist, at (540) 483-7440 to learn more about the many ways you can help. **Remember, the key to reducing euthanasia is preventing unwanted litters. Please spay/neuter all of your pets.**

Franklin County Public Safety Department Participates in Life-Saving New Program

In March 2007, Franklin County Public Safety was invited to participate in a newly developed program offered by Carilion Health System. The program, "Field Heart Alert", is geared toward getting heart attack patients to the Carilion Catheterization Lab as quickly as possible to increase survival rates.

Select paramedics from the career division of Franklin County Public Safety have received additional training in the recognition of heart attack symptoms, which will assist cardiologists in the diagnosis of heart attacks prior to arrival at the hospital. After a pre-diagnosis is made in the field, a "Field Heart Alert" is activated. Once activated, the patient no longer has to be seen in the emergency department, but instead goes directly to the cardiac catheterization lab upon arrival at Carilion Roanoke Memorial Hospital.

In the catheterization lab, special procedures are used to clear blocked vessels of the heart. The current national average for heart attack patients arriving at the catheterization lab from calling 9-1-1 is 90 minutes. Since the participating in this program, Franklin County Public Safety has been able to reduce that national average by approximately 30 minutes. To date, three Franklin County residents have received this advanced care, all of which have been discharged from the hospital with no complications.

Also participating in this program are Roanoke City Fire-EMS, Roanoke County Fire-Rescue, Salem Fire Department, Botetourt County EMS and Carilion Transportation System. Franklin County Public Safety would like to thank, Carilion Health System and the Chief of Cardiology at Carilion Roanoke Memorial, Dr. Paul Frantz, for including Franklin County in this very important and cutting edge program.

For more information on this, or other public safety programs call 540-483-3091.

Franklin County Public Safety Continues Important NIMS Training

Part of Homeland Security Presidential Directive (HSPD-5), Management of Domestic Incidents, directed Homeland Security to establish the National Incident Management System (NIMS). The NIMS provides a consistent nationwide approach for Federal, state, tribal, and local governments to work effectively and efficiently together to prepare for, prevent, respond to, and recover from domestic incidents, regardless of cause, size, or complexity.

The NIMS establishes standard incident management processes, protocols and procedures so that all responders can work together more effectively.

The NIMS Integration Center is coordinating the development of a National Standard Curriculum for NIMS. This curriculum is built around available federal training opportunities and course offerings that support NIMS implementation. The curriculum also will serve to clarify training that is necessary for NIMS-compliance and streamline the training approval process for courses recognized by the curriculum.

Over the past year, the Franklin County Public Safety department has assumed responsibility for and has made significant progress in implementing the NIMS training locally to EMS/Fire & Police. We must be able to come together, at all levels of government, to prevent, prepare for, respond to, and recover from any emergency or disaster. The implementation of the NIMS within every local jurisdiction, including Franklin County, creates a baseline capability that, once established nationwide, will be the foundation for our prevention, preparedness, response, and recovery strategies.

For more information on NIMS, please call Public Safety at 540-483-3091 or visit the Public Safety Department online at: http://www.franklincountyva.org/pub_safety/index.htm



For more information on volunteering with Public Safety

Fire/EMS: Contact Mike Pruitt 540-483-3091

Animal Shelter: Contact Faye Hicks 540-483-7440

Public Works Department

Waste Management & Recycling

The Franklin County Board of Supervisors has adopted a new program in lieu of the Spring & Fall Cleanup Program. The large containers for bulk trash will now be rotating at different “Green Box” sites throughout the year. Citizens are encouraged to use these large containers for residential bulk trash rather than leaving large items on the ground around the “Green Box” sites. **However, these containers are NOT to be used for brush, construction debris, tires or car batteries. Those items should be taken to the Landfill for disposal.** Businesses and contractors are prohibited from using the bulk containers.

The County is now offering two additional sites for recycling bringing the total to ten. Look for the recycling containers at the two newest sites in Hardy and Penhook. Residents can recycle cans (Bi-Metal or Aluminum), plastics (no motor oil containers, please) and newspapers and their inserts at these new sites. Recycling reduces the amount of trash entering the Landfill each year and makes our environment a better place for our children. For more information regarding the new bulk trash schedule, Waste Management operations or recycling, please contact the Landfill at 540-489-1600.

Landfill Hours of Operation

Homeowners:

Monday through Friday 7:00am—4:30pm

Saturday and Holidays 7:00am—3:00pm

Commercial Haulers and Businesses:

Monday through Friday 7:00am—4:30pm

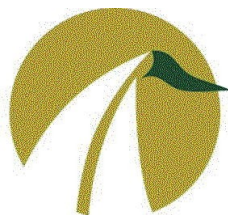
Saturday and Holidays 7:00am—3:00pm

Holidays

7:00am—3:00pm

CLOSED

Sundays, Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day and New Years Day



Joint Public Water Project

On April 16, 2007, the Western Virginia Water Authority (WVWA), Roanoke County and Franklin County Supervisors approved a \$5.5 million project that will make water available to parts of the Route 220 corridor that currently do not have access to this service.

The project will extend public water approximately 12 miles along Route 220 from the Clearbrook area of Roanoke County to Wirtz Plateau in Franklin County. Construction of the project is expected to take eighteen (18) months to two (2) years to complete, after all permitting has been obtained.

The funding for the project will be shared by Franklin and Roanoke Counties based on distance within each jurisdiction. Franklin County's portion will be approximately \$3.5 million of which \$1.0 million will be covered by a State and Tribal Assistance Grant [STAG] grant awarded by Congress thanks to the assistance of Congressman Virgil Goode.

For more information, please contact the Public Works Department at: (540) 483-6676 from 8:30 to 5:00 Monday through Friday.

Green Box Site Reminder!

Longtime residents of the County know that “household garbage” is disposed of at the County’s “Green Box” sites located across the County. What many residents may not remember is that Green Boxes are not available for **non-household garbage, yard waste, commercial or construction debris (shingles, wood scraps, 2x4's, etc.) furniture or appliances of any kind. In lieu of disposing of bulk items in the large bulk containers mentioned above, non-household waste should be disposed of at the landfill on Route 220 South.**

Some Do's and Don'ts for Green Boxes:

DO

Empty household waste
Bag whenever possible
Recycle
Clean up after yourself

DON'T

Leave trash on the ground
Leave furniture or appliances
Leave animals or hazardous waste
Use for Commercial waste
Use for construction debris

Citizens are reminded that substantial penalties may be imposed for improper use of the boxes. The County is stepping up its efforts to enforce responsible usage of the green box collection system. For more information, please call 489-1600.

County Partners with Private Internet Service Provider to Expand Broadband Options for Citizens

Franklin County issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) in spring of 2005 to locate a private Internet Service Provider to partner with to expand the broadband offerings in the County. This action was in response to the results of a Broadband Assessment Study completed in January 2005. That study indicated the primary broadband provider was the cable company which had limited coverage in the County. The partnership with B2X Online, Inc. of Salem was approved and project plans began in fall 2005 to build a wireless mesh system in Franklin County that would connect remote government offices to the County's network, expand broadband offerings to citizens and connect all fire and rescue stations for public safety data sharing. The partnership project also took advantage of the tower enhancements and expansion required for the upgrade to the County's Public Safety Radio system.

Since forming the partnership, all County offices are now on one network – reducing costs, improving security and sharing data; over half of the fire and rescue stations now have broadband connectivity and are on the County network with the ability to share public safety data; the number of County citizens subscribing to B2X's service has increased steadily from less than 100 in January 2005 to a total of about 900 with an additional 300 or more awaiting the Smith Mountain West site that will go live before July 2007. Approximately 70% of the County's area is now covered by B2X Online's service, although terrain sometimes prohibits delivery of the service to some residences within those areas.

The County has provided infrastructure (towers, poles or water tanks) for 5 transmit sites in Franklin County, including a tower on Tom's Knob that will be used to facilitate the public radio system and expansion of broadband services in Snow Creek and surrounding areas by winter 2007. In addition, AEP has submitted plans for approval to begin construction of a tower on Cook's Knob just north of the Ferrum area. The County has agreement with AEP for space on this tower so broadband services will be offered to the Ferrum area as well.

B2X has expanded services to areas in Bedford County that also serve the eastern and north-eastern areas of Franklin County. B2X also negotiated agreements with other tower owners to establish transmit sites on Briar Mountain and Lynville Mountain. The County utilized some homeland security grant money to address the connectivity of fire and rescue stations and then provided \$38,000 in FY06-07 budget to fund some of the infrastructure and equipment needs.

Contact B2X Online at their Salem office (540-389-7924 or 866-800-8886) for a site survey if you are interested in high-speed Internet service.



The Franklin Center for Advanced Learning & Enterprise Opened August 13th

The County held the Grand Opening of The Franklin Center for Advanced Learning & Enterprise, a 31,000 square foot state-of-the-art facility, on August 13, 2007. The facility services the community through a consortium of partners to provide education, workforce development and conference services.

In addition to Franklin County, the consortium of partners includes Patrick Henry Community College, Virginia Western Community College, Ferrum College, Virginia Employment Commission, Goodwill Industries of the Valley, Step, Inc., Town of Rocky Mount, Southern Area Agency on Aging, Franklin County Public Schools, Virginia Department of Rehabilitative Services, Franklin County Chamber of Commerce, Franklin County Department of Social Services, and the West Piedmont Business Development Center.

Classes and services offered by The Franklin Center include: Literacy, English as a Second Language, pre-GED, GED, high school diploma, college tutoring, life skills, and a number of college courses that are offered both locally and through distance learning.

Both Patrick Henry and Virginia Western Community Colleges have increased the number of course offerings during both day and evening hours, financial support, and the numbers of staff at our Rocky Mount facility.

The Department of Rehabilitative Services has added a Navigator position in our center which will serve the Workforce Areas of III and XVII. The navigator will train staff on assistive devices, rehabilitative services, and serve as a resource to both staff and clients.

Goodwill of the Valleys continues to manage the Youth and Adult Programs for the Workforce Investment Board. Numbers of customers served in the Youth Program have more than doubled from this same time period of last year.

The completion of the \$5.5 million Franklin Center offers expanded opportunities to citizens, as well as employers in the region. Through visionary efforts by the Franklin County Board of Supervisors, the Franklin Center will provide access to next generation technology to all clients giving extraordinary opportunities for furthering education, increasing job readiness and conference communications.

For more information, please visit:
www.thefranklincenter.org or call 540-489-0179



Franklin County Commerce Center

Plans for the Franklin Commerce Center to welcome the German manufacturer McAirlands are well underway. McAirlands is a factory based company that produces a new patented absorbent material for life sciences applications, such as hospital bed linens proven to prevent bed sores.

Land clearing has begun for the new manufacturing facility. Contracts for development have been awarded to Steve Martin's Trenching, Falwell Corporation, and JWS Communications. Notices to proceed have been released. The facility is scheduled to be open and operating by year's 2008 end providing living-wage employment opportunities for the County.

Commissioner Completes 2007 Assessments

The Commissioner of Revenue's office has completed assessments for the 2007 tax year for personal property and real estate taxation. Tax bills will be mailed by early October.

In 1998, the General Assembly enacted the Personal Property Tax Relief Act which provided relief from personal property taxes otherwise payable on the first \$20,000.00 of value on vehicles owned by individuals and utilized for personal use. The relief is provided by the Commonwealth through a lump sum payment to each locality in Virginia. Even though the amount received from the Commonwealth remains the same each year, the percentage of relief to you declines each year based on the growth in the locality. The percentage of relief for each qualifying vehicle that will be applied to your 2007 personal property tax bill will be 62.29%.

If you are a real estate owner with at least 5 acres of land in agriculture or 20 acres or more of forest land you may qualify for taxation relief through the Land-Use program. If you are interested and qualify, you must enroll by November 1, 2007 for the 2008 tax year. Also, a reminder to property owners currently enrolled in the program will be mailed their 2008 land use revalidation forms at the end of September 2007 and they **MUST** be returned by November 1, 2007. **For more information, contact the Commissioner of the Revenue's office @ 540-483-3083.**

Franklin County's Award Winning Finance Department

Franklin County has received the Government Finance Officers Association's Distinguished Budget Presentation Award for the fifth consecutive year. This national recognition is given to governments who prepare budget documents of the highest quality to meet the needs of decision-makers and citizens.

New Branch Library to Open at Westlake

In a joint statement on June 21, 2007, the Board of Supervisors and the Library Board announced the opening of the county's first branch library facility in the Westlake Towne Center.

With approximately 6,700 square feet of space, the facility can potentially house a collection of forty thousand items, including books, magazines, DVDs, books on CD and cassette, as well as other audio-visual materials.

Patrons will have the choice of using the library's public computers or accessing the Internet on their own laptops through the facility's wireless connection. Story Hour for pre-schoolers, along with other programs for adults and teens, will be held in the Library meeting room.

A regular delivery service will make additional materials from the main library and patrons may access libraries around the country through the inter-library loan service. The branch facility is scheduled to open in 2008.

Aging Services Celebrates

Older American's Month was celebrated in the County this year on May 25 at the Aging Services center with special recognition and a prize awarded to the oldest resident in attendance. Rose Boyd, the Center's Director, emphasized, "we look forward to this event every year. It gives us an opportunity to celebrate those elders who have come from a broad array of backgrounds and careers."

Governor Timothy H. Kaine signed a proclamation recognizing May as Older American's Month in the Commonwealth of Virginia and called attention to observance of this month to all citizens. The theme of this year's celebration is, "*Older Virginians, Making Choices for a Healthier Future*".

For more information on the services offered by the Aging Services Department, contact Rose Boyd at 540-483-9238



County Office Buildings Join Recycling Efforts

Under direction from the Board of Supervisors, Franklin County has implemented a "pilot recycling program" beginning with the County Administration office. Beginning with "office mix", the County will recycle stationary, envelopes, common office paper stock, newspaper print, cardboard, and aluminum. Recycling containers have been placed at designated areas for collection in hopes of setting the standard for a more environmentally friendly community.

Franklin County Septic Tank Pump-Out Program at Work!

In recent years there has been concern about malfunctioning or poorly maintained septic systems and the adverse effects they may be having on lake water quality. In an effort to reduce the risk of sewage contamination reaching Smith Mountain Lake, Franklin County adopted an ordinance requiring the inspection or pump-out, every five years, of any septic system that is located within 500 feet of the shore of Smith Mountain Lake. With the passage of the Mandatory Septic Tank Pump-Out Program ordinance in July of 2006 the county began the process of notifying over 4000 lakeside home and business owners of their new responsibilities. This new program is one of the ways in which Franklin County is helping to protect Smith Mountain Lake, one of our most important natural resources.

The response to the program has been overwhelmingly positive. Many lakeside residents have already complied with the pump-out requirements. The program is keeping the local service professionals very busy so be sure to schedule your service in advance.

The program has been educational in many ways. Those who are relocating here from more urbanized areas, where they enjoyed the benefits of a municipal sewer system, are often surprised to find what they have underground and how it all works. Others are struggling to find septic tanks that have long since been forgotten. Luckily, local septic service companies have a number of methods for locating lost septic tanks when necessary.

Don't know where your tank is? The Virginia Department of Health office in Rocky Mount may have records on file that show where tanks and drain-fields are located. 540-484-0292

One of the major hurdles the program has faced is making contact with each and every homeowner in the affected area. Many homes are used only seasonally and many properties have changed hands since the inception of the program. If you own a home within 500 feet of the edge of the Smith Mountain Lake and have not received your registration package, please contact us at 540-483-3027.

For those homes not affected by the program, the industry recommends that all septic tanks be serviced every 3 to 5 years. The cost of routine service is a fraction of the cost of replacing a failed system, so be proactive! Protect your home and the environment and take care of your septic system.

For additional information or guidance regarding this program, please contact the Department of Planning and Community Development at 540-483-3027.

Franklin County 2025 Comprehensive Plan Adopted by Board of Supervisors

After two years of work by the Planning Commission and interested citizens and more than thirty public meetings, the Franklin County Board of Supervisors adopted the County's updated Comprehensive Plan on May 22, 2007.

This Comprehensive Plan, while building on the concepts of earlier plans, is the first major revision of the "Comp Plan" since 1995. It attempts to address new challenges that will face Franklin County over the next twenty years and to provide a framework to help guide public officials to meet the Goals, Objectives, Strategies, and Policies established by Franklin County Planning Commission for future land use, economic growth, natural resources, public facilities and several other areas.

The Goals, Objectives, and Strategies are set forth for eight functional areas, which are Community Facilities, Cultural Resources, Economic Development, Education, Environment, Housing, Public Utilities, and Transportation. The future land use section acknowledges the limits of the County as an entity to control the location of new growth. The Plan also recognizes the limits of land and infrastructure in the County to support new development, and the needs of the citizens who live here in the County now and who will live in the County in the future.

Franklin County 2025 Comprehensive Plan can be found on the County's website at www.franklincountyva.org, as well as hard copy or CD for a nominal fee through the Planning Department. Any questions concerning the plan can be directed to Lisa Cooper in the Planning and Community Development Department. 540-483-3027

The Planning Commission meets monthly. See schedule below:

All Scheduled Meetings

Begin at 7pm

Planning Commission

12/11/07

01/08/08

02/12/08

03/11/08

04/08/08

Reassessment 2008 Information

In accordance with the Code of Virginia, Franklin County is required to reassess all real property every four years. An appraisal firm is hired according to the required request for proposal process to perform the reassessment. The firm visits every property in Franklin County including manufactured homes. This field study usually takes twelve months. The new appraised values will become effective January 1, 2008.

After completion of the field work. A reassessment notice is mailed to each Franklin County property owner. The owner may contact the appraisal company to question his/her new property value. If the property owner is not satisfied with the outcome, an appointment with the Board of Equalization may be scheduled for February or March of 2008. The Board of Equalization is comprised of Franklin County citizens and they may raise, lower or endorse the new assessment. A final appeal may be made to the Franklin County Circuit Court if not resolved by the Board of Equalization.

Hearing Information:

You may appeal your reassessment using the following methods:

Complete the tear-off form at the bottom of the notice you received in the mail – mail or fax this form to the reassessment office by November 26, 2007. This will serve as your appeal and you will not need to appear in person at a hearing. A representative of Wampler-Eanes will contact you after reviewing the information provided by you. Fax number is 540-489-5900.

Complete the on-line request form by going to www.franklincountyva.org and following the reassessment link. Please complete this form by November 30, 2007.

Call the reassessment office at 540-489-0700 to discuss your reassessment over the phone or to schedule an appointment for a review of your reassessment. Walk-ins will also be accepted. Please call by November 30, 2007

Dates and Times:

Monday	November 19	8:30am – 4:30 pm	Wednesday	November 28	8:30am-4:30 pm
Tuesday	November 20	8:30am – 4:30 pm	Thursday	November 29	1:00pm-7:30pm
Wednesday	November 21	8:30am – 4:30 pm	Friday	November 30	8:30am-4:30pm
Monday	November 26	8:30am – 4:30 pm	Monday	December 3	8:30am-4:30pm
Tuesday	November 27	8:30am – 4:30 pm	Tuesday	December 4	1:00pm-7:30pm

All hearings and appeals of Franklin County's Reassessment will be held at 40 West Church Street (Old Developmental Center) in Rocky Mount. Please use the side entrance facing the farmer's market.

Information on your Franklin County Reassessment

Every effort has been made to assess your property on a fair and equitable basis. However, if you feel the assessed value shown does not represent the present market value of your property, or the assessed value is not uniform with similar properties in your area, you may come in and discuss your assessment. Values may be raised or lowered during these hearings in order to maintain equalization.

By State Law, all real property must be assessed at 100% fair market value (Virginia Code 58.1-3201). The last general reassessment in Franklin County was in 2004. The current reassessment reflects the present market value of your property.

Public Hearing on Tax Rates

The tax rates which apply to this reassessment are set annually by the Board of Supervisors as part of the budget process. The public hearing date will be advertised in the local newspaper and is tentatively scheduled for mid to late April 2008.

The new reassessment **does not** mean your taxes will increase at the same amount.



Frequently Asked Questions— Reassessment 2008

What is a reassessment? Reassessment is the process of re-determining the value of property or land for tax purposes.

Why have reassessments? Periodic reassessments are required by law to ensure that each property is valued fairly. As required by the Code of Virginia, Franklin County is conducting a general reassessment to be effective January 1, 2008. The Code of Virginia requires all real property be assessed at market value.

What should I expect from reassessment? A reassessment will result in a new value being established for your property. This new value will replace the value currently on your property and will be the basis used for taxing property. Please remember that an increase in property value does not automatically mean an increase in your property taxes.

When was the last reassessment? The last reassessment took place in 2003. Its results went into effect on January 1, 2004. The 2004 reassessment encompassed over 39,000 parcels with a total value of more than \$4.3 billion.

What is the reassessment process? The County is divided into smaller neighborhoods for purpose of market comparison.

Each property is visited by a field inspector who verifies data and collects additional data. The field review is done with the homeowner if they are at home.

Data collection is entered into the mass appraisal system and accuracy validated.

Neighborhood sales, land values, yearly appreciation trends and other data are analyzed throughout the process.

When reassessment is complete in late 2007, property owners will be notified. Hearings with the appraisers will be held if requested.

Property owners who continue to disagree with the reassessment results may appeal to a Board of Equalization appointed by the Circuit Court from recommendation made by the County.

Who is conducting the reassessment? Wampler-Eanes Appraisal Group of Daleville, Virginia has been retained by Franklin County to do new real estate value assessments of every taxable residential and commercial property in the County.

What causes property values to change? A property's value can change for a number of reasons: physical changes such as additions, garages, remodeling; or damage or destruction; to name just a few. The most frequent cause of change in assessed value results from a change in the market.

What is "Market Value"? Market value is defined as the amount a typical, well-informed purchaser would be willing to pay for a property, under the following conditions:

The seller and buyer must be unrelated.

The seller must be willing, but not under undue pressure to sell and the buyer must be willing, but not under any obligation to buy.

The property must be on the market for a reasonable length of time. The payment must be in cash or its equivalent, and the financing, if required, must be typical for that type of property.

If all these conditions are present, this is considered a market value, or "arm's length," sale.

How will the reassessment affect my taxes? The percentage increase in your assessed value does not automatically mean the same percentage increase in your taxes. The Board of Supervisors establishes tax rates to be applied to this assessed value during the upcoming budget process.

Why do I have to pay property taxes? We've all become accustomed to the level of services provided by our local community. Schools, sheriff, public safety, libraries, parks, and recreation programs are only a few of the amenities property taxes make possible.

When will the results be available? Reassessment notices to property owners are to be mailed on November 9th, 2007.

What if I disagree with the assessed value? A taxpayer has a right to appeal their property tax assessment for any reason. The burden of proof, however, will be on the taxpayer to prove why they should have their assessment changed. Just saying "*My taxes are too high*", is not sufficient. You may appeal by either submitting a written appeal or by scheduling a face-to-face hearing.

Frequently Used Telephone Numbers

Agency	Telephone	Agency	Telephone
Adult Probation and Parole	(540) 483-0854	Information Technology	(540) 483-3037
Animal Control/Shelter	(540) 483-7440	Juvenile & Domestic Relations Court	(540) 483-3055
Board of Supervisors	(540) 483-3030	Juvenile Court Services	(540) 483-3050
Building Permits and Inspections	(540) 483-3047	Landfill/Solid Waste	(540) 483-7041
Circuit Court	(540) 483-3075	Library	(540) 483-3098
Clerk of the Circuit Court	(540) 483-3065	Magistrate	(540) 483-3076
Commissioner of the Revenue	(540) 483-3083	Planning & Community Development	(540) 483-3027
Commonwealth's Attorney	(540) 483-3092	Public Safety	(540) 483-3091
Comprehensive Services Act CSA	(540) 483-7209	Public Works	(540) 483-6676
County Administrator	(540) 483-3030	Real Estate	(540) 483-3085
County Treasurer	(540) 483-3078	Recycling Information	(540) 489-1600
Deeds and Wills	(540) 483-3065	School Board Office	(540) 483-5138
Dog Licenses	(540) 483-3078	Senior/Aging Services	(540) 483-9238
Emergency: E-911 Fire/EMS/Police	911 Non-Emergency (540) 483-3000	Sheriff	(540) 483-3000
VT Extension Services	(540) 483-5161	Smith Mountain Lake Chamber of Commerce	(540) 721-1203
Family Resource Center	(540) 483-5088	Social Services	(540) 483-9247
Forestry Department/VA	(540) 483-5330	Tax Payments	(540) 483-3078
Franklin County Chamber of Commerce	(540) 483-9542	Vehicle Decals (County)	(540) 483-3078
The Franklin Center for Advanced Learning & Enterprise	540-483-0179	Voter Registration	540-483-3025
Franklin Co. Land Use Office	(540) 483-3084	Water/Sewer Utilities	540-483-6660
Franklin Co. Merchants & Business Association	(540) 483-9211	Workforce Development	(540) 483-0179
Game Warden	(540) 483-3077	Town of Rocky Mount	
General District Court	(540) 483-3060	Town Manager	(540) 483-7660
General Properties	(540) 483-3087	Police Department	911 for emergency or (540) 483-9275
GIS Mapping	(540) 483-3012		
Goode, Virgil H. Jr.	(540) 484-1254	Village of Ferrum	
Health Department	(540) 484-0292	Water and Sewer Authority	(540) 365-2193
Hunting/Fishing Licenses	(540) 483-3065	Town of Boones Mill	
		Town Office	(540) 334-5404